



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING




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GOVERNOR

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INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT  
OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** State Board of Education

**FROM:** Jeremy M. Hughes, Ph.D., Chairman 

**DATE:** June 27, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Discussion on Proposed Redesign of the Blue Ribbon Schools Award Program

Michigan's Blue Ribbon Schools Award program has been embraced by the educational community for many years. It recognizes schools not only for high standards in student achievement, but for building purposeful learning communities as well. The advent of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* placed increased significance on recognizing successful schools, the promising practices exhibited by these schools, and the sharing of these proven strategies with schools identified for improvement.

The Michigan Department of Education's Office of School Improvement is responsible for ensuring coherence across programs that support high priority schools, as well as for highlighting the efforts of schools with successful practices. It is in that spirit that the Office of School Improvement is proposing modifications to the current Blue Ribbon Schools Award program so that it can become a more viable part of the Department's efforts to support our state's educational community. The attached (Attachment A) outlines the modifications being recommended by the Office of School Improvement.

Attachment

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**Blue Ribbon Schools Award Program  
Recommended Modifications  
Office of School Improvement  
Michigan Department of Education**

**Eligibility Criteria:**

- ✓ Schools that have made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and are determined as accredited (A or B) on EdYES!
- ✓ Schools can reapply after a 6-year cycle.
- ✓ Districts that have all schools in Blue Ribbon status are eligible to receive "Blue Ribbon District" Award.

**Selection Criteria:**

- ✓ Schools are selected for Blue Ribbon School (BRS) status based on: student achievement, responses to the School Improvement Framework, and external review (Office of School Improvement).
- ✓ Extra points awarded to schools based on poverty percent.

**Selection Committee:**

- ✓ Selection committee is representative of broad educational community.

**Commitment from BRS Awardees:**

- ✓ BRS Awardees agree to serve as mentor/partner school with a high priority school and provide expertise when requested by the Department.

**Timeline:**

**June – August 2005:** Planning committee redesigns Michigan's Blue Ribbon Schools Award program.

**September 2005:** New Blue Ribbon Schools program is presented to the State Board of Education for adoption.

**September - October, 2005:** Application form is posted on the MDE website.

**November – December, 2005:** Office of School Improvement presents six regional application workshops. Selection committee members are identified.

**October 2005 - February, 2006:** Window in which schools can apply for BRS designation.

**March 2006:** Blue Ribbon Schools are selected

**April – May 2006:** Blue Ribbon Schools Award celebrations are scheduled throughout the state.